

ETHICS IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The long-term goal of the City of Atlanta's Board of Ethics and Ethics Office is to instill a culture of ethics in city government. Our work for the past two years, however, has focused primarily on bringing the City into compliance with the standards set forth in the City's Code of Ethics. The Board has enforced these ethical standards by issuing advisory opinions and holding hearings on financial disclosure violations. In 2004, the Ethics Office developed employee training programs, advised individuals on the ethics code, and sought compliance with the financial disclosure process. In 2005, the major initiative has been to develop a web-based ethics efilg system with online forms and a public search function to view the information disclosed by officials and employees. In 2006, the Ethics Office and Board will strengthen their enforcement efforts in several strategic ways: establishing the IntegrityLine, promoting this hotline with a public awareness campaign, investigating reported ethics violations, and prosecuting violators. Although it will require more education, resources, collaboration, and commitment from the City of Atlanta, a culture of ethics in city government is an attainable goal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ethics Officer makes the following recommendations for action by Mayor Shirley Franklin, Council President Lisa Borders, members of the Atlanta City Council, and department heads:

1. *Launch the Year of Integrity Matters* by:
 - a. Instituting the IntegrityLine
 - b. Promoting the hotline through an Integrity Matters campaign
 - c. Establishing the City of Atlanta Public Integrity Unit with adequate staff and accessible office space
2. *Enact an ordinance requiring paid lobbyists to register* with the City of Atlanta's Ethics Office
3. *Make compliance with the City's Code of Ethics* a critical part of the performance review of department heads and other supervisors
4. *Improve the public's access to online disclosure forms* by:
 - a. Enhancing the public search function of the efilg system
 - b. Disclosing on online forms, as required by law, conflicts of interest, gifts to the City, and expenses paid by prohibited sources
 - c. Providing access to the online forms to enable affected city employees to file online
5. *Require mandatory ethics training* within the next three years for the officials and employees required to file financial disclosure statements